

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Claims 21-38 remain pending in this application. No claims have been canceled or added.

Priority

Applicants request the acknowledgment of the claim for priority. The priority document (JP 2001-117611, filed April 17, 2001) was filed in the parent application, serial no. 09/987,815, November 16, 2001, and is referred to in the Official Filing Receipt dated January 6, 2004.

35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 21-38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Watanabe (U.S. Patent No. 6,748,502) in view of Ritter (U.S. Patent No. 6,829,593). These rejections are traversed as follows.

The present application is a divisional application of U.S. Serial No. 09/987,815, filed November 16, 2001. Since the present application and the cited reference to Watanabe et al are commonly assigned, the Watanabe et al reference is not available as prior art under 35 U.S.C. §103. Therefore, it is requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

Appl. No. 10/716,471
Response dated November 29, 2005
Reply to Office Action of August 29, 2005

NIT-308-03

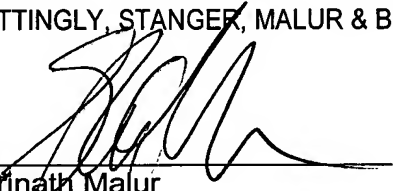
The Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned by telephone with any questions in order to expedite prosecution of this application.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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